

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FROM THE UNITARIAN MISCELLANY.

JUSTICE OF GOD NOT OPPOSED TO HIS MERCY.

There is not perhaps, in the whole range of school divinity, a more fruitful source of error, than the opinion, so generally entertained, of the opposing and contradictory qualities, influences, and requisitions of God's justice and mercy. To read the common *schemes*, as they are called, of the theologians, one would imagine, that the divine mind was never at peace, that a perpetual conflict was kept up between its lenient inclinations, and the stern demands of what might not irreverently be termed a sense of duty, were it not more like the unbending fate, which was thought by the ancients to govern the determinations of their supreme divinity; for though not stated to be so, it certainly gives the impression of an external and independent power, which interposes itself to forbid the intentions of love.

This idea is not confined to written systems, and voluminous bodies of divinity; would that it were, for then its injurious effects might not be so extensive; but your children are taught to repeat it in their catechisms, yourselves repeat it in your church creeds, it is forced into the prayers of your clergymen, and they insist and dilate upon it in their lectures and sermons, over and over again. On the great subject of the mission, sufferings, and death, of the Savior, you are constantly told that God saw the sinful and wretched condition of men, that he pitied, and resolved to save them; but they had sinned, rebelled, and fallen; they had committed an infinite offence against an infinite Deity, and a frowning, unrelenting *Justice* interposes, and calls for an infinite satisfaction, the sacrifice of his only Son. Mercy is obliged to yield, Justice obtains its demand; while, in the language of a bargain, the sacrifice is called an *equivalent*, and the whole transaction is termed a *merciful plan*, a *dispensation of love*! No wonder that there are so many infidels, when this is represented as christianity.

Without entering upon an examination of the several errors of this system, a few remarks will be offered on that, which may be considered as the fundamental and prevailing one, namely, the supposition of a disagreement between the attributes of God; the idea that his rigorous justice intercepts the benovolent designs of his mercy.

Is not this opinion, in the first place, degrading to the true character of Supreme Perfection? Does it not leave a blank in the description of Deity, which even our finite conceptions may fill? Is it consistent with the *unity* of his character, thus to present one of its principles in decided opposition to another? Is it consistent with the *loveliness* of his character, thus to present its severity overcoming its benevolence? Or is it consistent with the *dignity* of his character, thus to present its benevolence yielding to its severity? With such conceptions of God, can we feel satisfied, can we feel secure? Let any unprejudiced and thinking man ask himself these questions separately and seriously.

Is not this opinion, in the second place, at variance, not only with proper apprehensions of the whole divine character, but with a proper definition of the divine justice and mercy, singly considered? What is the justice of God, and what is his mercy? Does his justice demand

inflictions, from which his mercy recoils? We think not. Does his mercy ask for indulgences, which his justice refuses to grant? We think not. When justice is unfeeling, and regards not, as its sole and ultimate end, the happiness of its objects, it certainly is not just; it ceases to be justice, and takes the aspect and character of cruelty.

And when mercy is short-sighted and partial, acting from impulse, rather than from a sense of right, and relieving present misery, rather than consulting for real and lasting good, it is no longer mercy, it has degenerated into weakness. Who will ascribe either of these dispositions to God? Who will say, that his justice is but wrath, and his mercy but unguided feeling? And yet this is virtually said by those, who hold the opinions against which we are contending; it is virtually said by the common error which we have stated; it is virtually said by those systems, which make our redemption the result of opposing principles and counsels, and the performance of a previous stipulation. There is no getting away from these inferences. In the common systems of divinity, the justice and mercy of God are plainly represented as distinct and opposed. Now these qualities, in their perfection, never can be either distinct or opposed; for perfect justice will always have pity on weakness and frailty, and perfect mercy will always unfalteringly pursue the straight and only course, which leads to the best possible consequences.

The idea, therefore, of an opposition between the justice and mercy of God, arises from a gross misapprehension of those attributes themselves, and is unworthy of the divine character. If these propositions are established, it follows, in the third place, that it will produce injurious effects on our own minds. Religion is so important a subject, that religious error must be hurtful in some way or other, and in a greater or less degree. God is the object and end of all religion, and so far as a particular system of religion inculcates wrong conceptions of God, it must be a false one, and false in its very foundation. God is the Supreme Disposer; he governs our lives according to his will, and keeps in his own hands the entire regulation of our future destiny. We are weak and powerless; we cannot stand before him; we know that we cannot; unforeseen and uncontrollable events defeat our intentions, and defy our calculations; and death comes, we know not how or when, to close the present scene. It must affect us nearly then, to know what is the character of this Being; and according to the conclusions which we form, will be in a great measure the complexion of our religious opinions, and the tone of our religious language.

If, then, we regard him as a monarch, whose resolutions are taken without reference to the nature and circumstances of those whom he governs, and whose inflictions are determined by a principle, which, however severe it may be, he is compelled to follow, we must of course regard him with feelings, which, in great part, will be those of apprehension and dread, with feelings which ought not to be connected, no, not at all, with the Only Wise and Good, with feelings which are calculated to repress the confidence and grateful love, with which we should seek our Father, and which should not be suffer-

ed to mingle with the adoration of the heart. And this is the fact. And this is the explanation of many of the superstitious notions and observances, which reflect any thing but honor on the religion of Christ. The Savior has been prayed to, and the Virgin Mary has been prayed to, and hundreds of saints have been prayed to, in preference, yes, we scruple not to say, in preference to the great and only true object of worship; because a servile and unworthy fear was entertained of that object, and other beings and names were resorted to, in order to propitiate and favorably incline the Holy One, who is always more ready to hear, than we are to pray, and always more willing to forgive us our sins, than we are to forsake them. What is the language of nine out of ten of the hymns which are addressed to Christ, and sung in christian churches? Plainly this; that Christ is a merciful, benignant, and compassionate being, who interposed between the anger of God and the destruction of men, and offered himself as a sacrifice to that inexorable vengeance, which neither could nor would accept of any other. Is this reason, is this religion, is this christianity, is this in accordance with the language of him, who said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God."

Now what can be the origin of so monstrous an error? We conceive it to be occasioned by referring the character and counsels of God to the very imperfect standard of our own actions and feelings. By this, we mean, that instead of raising their own ideas to some understanding of perfection, men have brought down perfection to the level of their own ideas, or in other words, have substituted imperfection in its place. They have considered, not so much the true and abstract nature of justice and mercy, as the justice and mercy which live upon earth, are conformed to their earthly residence, and modified by the passions, the weakness, the false judgment, the short-sightedness of man. It is true, that we must form our conceptions of the personal attributes of God, from corresponding qualities among ourselves; but then we must not confine them here, but remember that they are to be invested with omniscience and infinity; in short, united to one another, and united to God.

To illustrate by an example. Brutus pronounced judgment against his own sons, because the good of the commonwealth, as he thought, required that they should die. This act has been praised by some as *just*, and condemned by others as *unmerciful*. One will think that he displayed his heroism in sacrificing the feelings of a father to the existence of a state; and another, that the voice of nature should never have been so cruelly stifled at the call of a heartless theory, or the prospect of an uncertain good. But the fact is, we are not competent to decide at all on the case, because we can neither balance motives nor consequences. Neither was Brutus capable of deciding whether he acted right or wrong, because he could not foresee effects, nor determine whether the father on the magistrate ought to have prevailed in the decision. He only acted according to the best of his judgment; and that is all which any man can do in a question of opposing feelings, interests, and considerations. But here is the error. Men have supposed the Deity to be placed in a

certain situation; and then have undertaken to say how he must have been influenced, and how he ought to have determined, and actually did determine, under the existing circumstances. They have undertaken to say, from their own notions of what would have been felt and done on earth, what in reality was felt and done in heaven; without reflecting that they were applying this rule to a Being, who is impassible and omniscient, and who could not, therefore, entertain any inclination in opposition to any principles, or be guided by any circumstances, of which he did not clearly see all the bearings, relations, and results.

We shall conclude this essay by giving such a view of the justice and mercy of God, as will form a summary of what has been offered on this subject. To speak strictly, we should say, that justice and mercy were not separate qualities of the divine mind, but that, although we used the name separately, for the sake of convenience and accommodation, they were, in fact, the same. The ways of God are right, and this expresses all that we mean, when we say that they are just and merciful. In the counsels of God, there can be no wavering, nor even deliberation: the course that alone is proper, the course that alone conduces to the best possible ends, in every possible connexion, and throughout all eternity, that course is alone pursued, and it is pursued exactly when its operation is called for by infinite wisdom. This course is just, at the same time that it is merciful because it is perfectly just. It never deviates on account of motives, which we should call compassionate, because if it should ever deviate in the least, it would cease to be both just and merciful. It never can be swayed by sentiments of anger or revenge, because, as it consults the good of the whole, and the good of each individual, it must terminate in the happiness of all. Let us henceforth have more enlarged and exalted conceptions of that Almighty Being, who is both Wisdom and Love, whose justice cannot be unmerciful, and whose mercy cannot be unjust; whose justice and mercy are one.

FROM THE UNIVERSALIST. OUR FINAL HOME.

'Man goeth to his long home.' *Eccles. xii. 5.*

'He is gone home,' replied an aged father in Israel, a short time since, to my inquiry concerning a deceased friend; 'He is gone home.' I have often heard the expression, but it never before fell on my ear with such a thrilling effect. Even in those few words, there was an impressive eloquence that spoke more effectually to my feelings than ever did the most polished oratory of refined scholars. I cannot describe the enthusiasm that swept like a flood over my whole heart, at this calm observation of my venerable friend. He stood before me like a grey haired prophet of old; and by the simple but eloquent utterance of those few words, poured upon me a light, and afforded me a pleasure, which could not have been conveyed by the most labored and vivid delineation of the enjoyments of heaven.

'He is gone home.' How engagingly beautiful the expression! What a glorious picture of the holy joys which our Father hath prepared for his children, is spread out before the eye of the imagination, merely by the naming of that charmed word. It leads us at once from earthly pleasures and mortal ties, to the enjoyments of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. The narrow circle that constitutes our home on earth is a Paradise, but who can imagine the glory, the delight of that home, in which God is the Father, and the whole human race brethren, in the bonds of unity and unchangeable love—*This*, then, is not our home; we are here only sojourners for a season; and the day of our departure hence ushers us into a new life and our true home.

With the proofs of this fact immediately before them, it is somewhat strange that men should so little regard a truth so important. Even with the image of death before their eyes, young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, are toiling for the pleasures and the riches and the wisdom of this world, as though they had never understood that there are pleasures of a purer and more enduring nature than those of sense; riches which 'neither moth nor rust can corrupt;' and a wisdom infinitely brighter, more exalted, and giving wider scope to the action of mind. The truth is, men live too much without a definite object, or rather spend their most precious moments in the vain chase of meteors which only sparkle to betray. They are like the simple voyager who, in his ignorance, takes for his guidance one of the revolving stars of heaven; and wonders and laments when the planet has set, and his bark is left on the ocean, in darkness and without a guide. A fixed object, a ruling principle should be set in man's bosom; a guiding star should be sought and earnestly regarded, by which he may be conducted in safety amidst the temptations and dangers, the storms and tempests that beset him on the voyage of life.

What should this governing principle, this star of hope be? The thoughtless young will answer, the search of enjoyment; the delight of ever changing and fascinating pleasures; which may banish reflection and immerse the mind in a dreamy intoxication. The worldly minded will declare, that the sending abroad ships upon the great waters; the amassing immense possessions of houses and lands and silver and gold, are alone the proper objects of rational pursuit, and in them alone is the true end of existence to be answered. The worldly wise will tell of the power of mind; of the vast moral energy which reduces all things under its sway; of the noble discoveries which have torn away the veil that has hung from the beginning over the operations of nature, and have opened many of her deep mysteries; and boldly declare that, in the pursuit of wisdom, in the investigations of philosophers; in the speculations of theorists; in the dreams of poets; may be found that happiness which is, in truth, the long sought philosopher's stone, and these, and these alone are worthy of the entire attention of man. But all these answers are prompted by minds ill informed; they result from circumscribed views of the nature and destiny of man; regarding him as a denizen of the earth, and limiting his thoughts, desires and inquiries, to the present life; and leaving out of the account the eternal home in which the spirit shall eventually take refuge. They are like the painter who, in the delineation of a beautiful landscape, should clothe with the most attractive colors the earth, the sea, the forests and the mountains, but should neglect to add the blue heavens or the brilliant sun, which give life and meaning to the picture.

Upon the yielding minds of the young, especially, should a proper view of life be impressed. Many are inclined to impose upon them a strict observance of the outward service of God, totally regardless whether their hearts are far from him or not. I would that youth might learn to worship him in spirit, and to this end that they might be early convinced of the endearing relationship which exists between their Maker and themselves. I would that they might be induced in very deed to 'remember their Creator,' and to dwell on his goodness, even in the midst of their peculiar enjoyments. This can be accomplished only by early instruction in his attributes of perfection, power and infinite love. It can be enforced by an appeal to the homes of our earthly fathers, which are but faint types of that which is to come. All nature abounds with speaking illustrations of God's tender mercy, so plainly written that 'he who runs may read;' so

clearly defined that even the eye of a child may distinguish, and his understanding comprehend them. To minds thus early imbued with pure and proper principles, the relation between itself and external objects is truly delightful; yet by no means such as to induce the belief, that in outward pleasures is permanent happiness. As the bee sucks honey from the flower, and draws its sweet store even from that which contains a deadly poison, so the young mind with its faculties properly awakened and directed drinks in from all the wonders of creation, instruction and delight; it learns the uncertainty that rules over the earth; the frailness of the chain that binds it here and is insensibly led to the contemplation of a higher pleasure, a holier object; that of laboring while yet the day endureth, that it may return home pure and unstained to the bosom of its God. To the mind perverted by false views, the daughters of music are indeed, brought low; there is discord and darkness in the soul; and feelings so influenced can neither see beauty in the ornaments of heaven nor hear music in the songs of birds; to them a deep gloom, and melancholy silence rest upon the last home. Let the young, then, leave the giddy revel; check the too earnest desire of profitless mirth; abandon those pursuits which deaden the soul to a perception of its godlike powers, its capacity for unlimited pleasure in the study of divine goodness, and rejoice in the prospect of an eternity of perfect enjoyment, when all men shall have 'gone home.'

The seeker after worldly riches may be improved by frequently turning his attention to the home of heavenly rest. That he must soon depart from this resting place on earth, that he can carry with him naught of all he hath toiled to obtain, he will readily acknowledge. Yet the pleasure of getting is sufficient to outweigh all other considerations, and he not only voluntarily shuts his eyes to the fact that here is not his home; and that another and better awaits him; but acts as though this truth had never been suggested to his notice. If man must have some earthly object to engross his attention—if his time and his talents are to be given to the acquisition of wealth, still the occasional remembrance that he is to go hence, to an eternal home, will have a beneficial influence on his life. In the time of abundant prosperity, it will teach him to regard all men as fellow travellers to the same heavenly mansion; it will lead him to extend a helping hand to those who are weary and faint by the way side, and to assist them through their troubles by kind words and deeds; it will raise his thoughts from the contemplation of earthly splendor and earthly power, to the ineffable glory of Jehovah, the magnitude and wonder of his works and the benevolent manner in which his almighty power is exercised toward his creatures. This train of thought will both soften his heart toward his fellow man, by leading him to imitate God in his benevolence; and suggest to his mind the propriety of seeking frequent communion with his Father, that he may be fitted to return with joy and everlasting honor to the home of Heaven.

The wise, of all men, seem to be the least dependent upon outward enjoyments, and to be capable of finding their pleasures more immediately within themselves. Their minds are to them their kingdoms; where they can reign unmoled; where they can build themselves up in the knowledge of arts, science, religion, laws, and the philosophy of nature. Yet this is by no means sufficient. As long as the scholar is destitute of this vital principle, the knowledge of the Father, and the belief that he has laid up for us a crown of glory in heaven our home; so long to him is the beauty of knowledge obscured; so long he sees all the wonders of wisdom with a feeble eye, and in a contracted horizon. To him they are dimmed by the film that intercepts

his vision or by the mist that hangs heavily over them. The goodness and benevolent designs of God are to the mind of man what the prism is to the eye. Viewed through this medium, all creation, the wonders of heaven and earth from the most magnificent event to the most trivial, every precept of religion, every truth in science, every discovery of the laws and organization of the material universe, become clothed with new beauty, afford additional pleasure, and are as it were irradiated with the peculiar splendor of heaven. In contemplations thus assisted and directed, the soul enjoys noble delight, assumes new strength, and in the thrill of joy and awe caused by a recognition of God's intimate connection with itself, and in the expectation of finally seeing his full glory, enjoys a foretaste of the bliss of heaven.

In this view the bereaved mourners, from whom God in the dispensation of his providence, hath separated the children of their affection or beloved relatives or friends, need not sorrow as those without hope. As the dove seeks a refuge from the tempest, so have their spirits sought rest in the bosom of their Father. This, then, is a balm for their wounded hearts; this can alleviate the anguish of the torn fibres of love; and pour the oil of consolation into their bleeding bosoms;—though children and friends shall be no more on earth forever, they have gone where 'tears shall be wiped from all faces,' where they shall enjoy, together with the whole human race the presence of the Father, and the peace of his kingdom.—Finally, it becomes us all as brief sojourners in a strange land, to lay aside the too absorbing search after the pleasures, the riches, or the wisdom of this world; and to covet rather the approbation of a pure heart and upright actions; to lay up for ourselves those 'treasures which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal;' and to look forward with willing and even joyful minds to the day when God shall call us hence, to dwell in the mansions and partake in the enjoyments of his heavenly home.

S. F. S.

THE CONTRAST.

We extract the following picture of a Gospel Preacher, contrasted with a Divine of modern stamp, from an article in the "*Philanthropist*," entitled the Priest and Infidel. Who that can retrace his observations on society for 20 or 30 years back, will not acknowledge the justness of the sketch.

"Young man, listen. I am not what I was. I was—well, let it pass. That sapling is tall, straight, vigorous and healthy. It promises to be the pride of the forest. Its sap may be drained, its leaf will fade, its branch wither. I had an early blight of feeling—I had a barrenness of soul. The passions had raged, burned and seared the heart. * * * * *

"Years wore away, and I continued the same withered and desolate being. I was the mere wreck of humanity, rotting on life's tideless ocean. I continued to travel—where, I cared not—wherefore, I asked not. One evening, one like this, after having wended my solitary way through a dark and hideous forest, I suddenly burst upon one of the loveliest villages which I had ever seen. It lay along the margin of a small but beautiful river, which glided along in a serpentine course under a fringe of willow, and flowering herbage, far as the eye could reach. The village stood partly on elevated ground, commanding a fine prospect of the plains which spread out upon the opposite side of the river, for some three or four miles, skirted by hills, now gradually with a gentle slope, and now abruptly rising into mountains, at length losing themselves in the clouds. The village

might contain some three or four hundred houses, built mostly after the same model. All bore the marks of neatness, convenience, but none of extravagance. * * * * * At a short distance, on an eminence which overlooked most of the village, half buried by a grove of young pines, near a fine waterfall, where nature seemed to have collected the beautiful, the wild, the grand, and the solemn, stood the village church, with its tall steeple pointing to a fairer and better world for the good.

"The bell chimed to vespers, as I came in sight of the little paradise which lay spread out in loveliness before me. Perhaps it was long since I had heard the bell of a village church. The home of my fathers, the scenes of my childhood, the pew in which I had so often sat and listened to the gracious words of our parish minister, came to my heart, and I know not but a sigh escaped me, though I had foresworn to feel.

"In my early life, I was of a religious turn. Every Sunday unless prevented by sickness, after I was old enough, to accompany my mother to the place of worship, had I listened to the words of the holy man. There was something about him to interest. * * * * *

"He was never known to speak a harsh word; he loved his fellow beings, and labored to win the erring back to the paths of virtue. He seldom played with Jove's thunderbolts. He seemed to delight only in recommending the paternal goodness and undying love of the Great Spirit. What was his peculiar belief no one knew—no one thought of asking. He taught us that the best disquisition on faith, was the example of a holy life; and that we should call that man brother, embrace him as such, whose walk was adorned by the practice of goodness. He discouraged contentions about words, and strife about unintelligible dogmas, which might indeed ruffle the temper and impair our mutual love, but could not very well secure peace on earth, or win heaven for our souls hereafter. His sermons were usually off-hand performances, but they were warm with benevolence; they glowed with a holy temper, and fitted us for heaven, as much by what they made us feel, as by what they taught us to believe. Indeed he seldom touched upon mere belief; he always avoided controverted points, and steered so clear of metaphysics, and mystery, that the child heard him with interest.

"While he lived we had no quarrel respecting religious faith or connexion. He assured us that the christian had a mild temper, benevolent feelings, and was anxious to embrace every man as a brother, every woman as a sister; he told us our common Father loved all his children, that he was pleased to see them all love each other, to see them all good, interchanging the kindest feelings and the best offices of social life, studying to endear the hearts of all to each other, and to melt all into one great family, where no discordant note shall be heard. He has long since paid the debt of nature—I wept over his grave. I cannot believe he is lost.—True, his successor said he was a heretic, and offered to prove him so by more than five hundred passages of scripture—but, to me his memory is sacred. I hope he is in heaven.—While he was our pastor, it is true we did not boast of our piety and humility; we said little about the topics which sectarians discuss; but we were peaceful, we loved each other, and blessed the Great Spirit for his tender care of us.

"Another minister came, not like the one we had lost. This was a dark looking man—a tall, spare, half a skeleton like being. He condemned the preaching which had made our village happy, for more than half a century; he assured us the good man for whom our tears were yet fresh was an instrument of Satan to lull men

asleep, to prepare them for the everlasting fire of hell. The truth, we were assured, was now preached. We had stirring discourses; the terrors, the thunders of Almighty wrath came thick and heavy; men's hearts trembled; we anxiously inquired how we might escape the awful vengeance suspended over our heads. The true religious faith, we were told, now prevailed; but times were sadly changed. For peace we had war; for good will, we had angry dispute; for happiness we had sectarian jealousies. We talked a great deal more about religion, but we seemed less friendly and less contented. As we increased in orthodoxy, we became ill tempered, and quarrelsome, as we made our calling and election sure. I grieved, for the pleasant times were gone. We had meetings every evening in the week. Our women became so zealous for God, that they forgot the duties of wives and mothers. Men did little else than wrangle and anathematize each other. Well, as all was a mystery to me, I became disgusted, loathed the name of religion, and from that time, when I was about twenty years of age, till approaching the village before me, I had not entered a church.

"The chime to vespers—it re-called happier days and holier feelings. The scene before me, the aged matron, the village maiden, the grand-sire on his crutch, man in his prime, the youth with buoyant feelings and bounding step, the child with its sweet smile and guileless heart—all wending their way to offer up the evening thanksgiving to the great Father of all—it waked my cold and callous heart, and made me hasten my steps to join the devotions of the happy villagers."

ORIGINAL.

SKETCHES FROM LIFE—NO. 2.

THE MOTHER.

"What were heaven, to a childless mother?"
Sermon by T. Fisk, on Isaiah xlix, 15.

It was my lot to be brought up, under the guidance of a mother, who was of the Calvinist persuasion. She was a thorough Calvinist in head, but little of a Calvinist in heart. Blessed be the God of mercy and goodness, there are but few who are such. And if it is a grievous thing to find in this world of ours, too many who are worse in practice than in principle; it is a pleasing thing to know that there are many whose principles are worse than their practice. Look at the tender-hearted, the gentle Cowper; whose bosom would have bled at the thought of inflicting unnecessary pain on the meanest thing in sentient creation. Whose sympathy and benevolence were ever awake to commiserate with, and, if in his power, to succour the distressed. Yet that man of humanity was a believer in the horrible dogmas of Calvin, and in the unutterably horrible doctrine of eternal punishment. Yes! he who would not have inflicted pain on a worm, for one moment, believed that his God was capable of inflicting, on a majority of mankind, the torments of eternity. He whose disposition was so forgiving, that he would not let the sun go down on his wrath—who thought it would be sinful to do so;—he could believe in a God, whose anger will neither die nor be diminished through countless ages; whose wrath towards a portion of his children can never be placated; his vengeance never satisfied! Reader! there are thousands of Cowpers in the world, in spite of the doctrines of him, who offered to the moloch of his imagination, an appropriate sacrifice, in the person of the gentle and good Servetus! My parent, even whilst a Calvinist in profession, was one of them; and I only brought forward the picture of Cowper, as that of a character well known, for his virtue and humanity—that I might point to it, and say—such was—such is—

my beloved parent. She is no longer, however, a Calvinist, even in principle; and it is the purpose of my present sketch to relate the circumstance, which unveiled to her the horrors of that creed, and led her to renounce it, for one less revoluting to the feelings of a parent.

It is known, I believe, to most that the doctrine of original sin with all its horrible inferential consequences, is a portion of the pure Calvinistic creed. It may, indeed, and has been modified, by many of its casuistical professors, so as to exclude from the possibility of damnation, all those who have not arrived at years of discretion, or the consciousness of right and wrong; but the principle, argue as they will, must lead to the awful position, that there are "infants in hell not a span long." The divine justice which can destine myriads of adults, irremediably to that portion, cannot be violated by a similar doom for a portion of the infant race. Few indeed, will now venture to state the abominable doctrine, plainly, and in so many words; the echo in the hearts of their hearers, would, if they did so, be, "Blasphemy! Blasphemy!" But, the time was, and not many years ago, when men dared to preach boldly, and congregations would listen passively, to such doctrines. It was considered a mark of theological courage, and unshrinking piety, in a preacher to be their literal advocate. Amongst other heroic expounders of such "glad tidings of great joy," the pastor, under whose ministry my mother had long been sitting, was pre-eminent. He was a man of a strong but coarse mind; of much firmness, I believe; but, certainly, of very little feeling; he was a shrewd reasoner—a well-read theologian, and a practised controversialist—but, *he was not, he never had been a father.* Such was the pastor of the church of which my mother was a member.

It happened to my dear parents, that they had frequently to endure that bitterest bitter in the cup of "connubial bliss"—the loss of children. Out of seven, they reared but two. The child, to whose loss, the subject of my sketch has especial reference, was at the time of his death, a most interesting infant of two years. All children are interesting to the parent; and, perhaps, the only thing which gave to the child in question, a pre-eminence of attachment, was, that he was snatched from them at a most interesting period of existence. The others died at a very young age. No warning symptom bade them prepare for the calamity at hand, up to the time of its last sickness. The beautiful blossom of their hopes, was daily unfolding its attractions and charms to the eye of parental fondness; the jealous eye, of a parent's anxious vigilance could perceive nothing indicative of early blight or fading. They had laid up for their souls a treasure for many days. But the wise decree of Providence had ordered otherwise; his commission had been issued to the grim minister of his merciful purposes, that the tender budding plant should be removed from the cold and stormy climes of time, to the genial soil and cloudless skies of a happy eternity. It was done. The child died.

There is but one Comforter for those who mourn the departed. It is Religion. There is but one consolation—the assurance that we shall meet again. Philosophy bids us not to mourn, because our mourning is useless. Alas! it is the very cause of our sorrow. But religion bids us forbear—because our grief is needless, inasmuch as we shall shortly be re-united with those for whom our tears are bitterly flowing. My father sought the solace of Philosophy, and, I doubt not, proved its inefficiency. My mother had recourse to Religion—what she thought such—and narrowly escaped the lunatic asylum.

On the Sabbath following the burial of my infant brother, she took her wonted station in the assembly of worship; her spirit yearning for

the consolation of those blessed assurances of future felicity, in which the innocent and the righteous shall participate; and sin, sorrow, and parting, be no more known forever. Alas! for the wretched mourner, the faithful evangelist on that day ascended the mount of cursing. He had chosen a subject which led him to expatiate, on the innate depravity of man, on the original sin of infants, and the incompatibility of a nature of sin with a future state of happiness in the presence of a pure and sinless God. His tongue was ready, his imagination vivid, and his heart forbad him not. He first pictured in awful terms the horrors of the deep and fiery gulph. Having consigned mature and aged sinners, to the regions of eternal misery, by thousands; he next took up in his holy hands the tainted babe of reprobation; he held it forth, as it were, at arm's length, over the flaming gulph; he pointed out the spots of its natural and unwashed leprosy; he called on the merciful God and on his angels to witness the justice he was about to execute; he called on the fiends of hell to receive their own; and dropped the guiltless babe, into the bottomless abyss of torments. My poor parent had fixed her ears and her eyes, as she has frequently since related, on the preacher from the commencement of this portion of his discourse. She thought she had never heard him speak, never seen him look so like a fiend before. Malice seemed to her, evident in his looks; and his words had the sound of one breathing forth the most diabolical revenge. His action too was so appropriative; his description so graphic. The whole was a picture, gleaming in vivid colors before her eyes. She saw the gulph—the smoke—the flames. She saw the child, he seemed to hold forth as he leaned over the pulpit. It was her own lost darling; and she beheld it fall into the gulph of perdition. Her soul sickened at the sight. It was with difficulty she could find firmness enough to leave her pew, and the church, and reach her home. It was in vain my poor father questioned her as to the cause which seemed to have added tenfold horrors to her former grief. She could not speak till a flood of tears, had relieved her swollen bosom of its grief. "It cannot be true," were the first words she uttered; but the conviction that "it is not true;" was a blessing she did not realize for many months. Alternate fits of intense grief, and the deepest despondency, in the meantime, preyed on her wasting frame. Her intellects, frequently, for a time, wavered under the influence of her harrowed feelings, and fearful apprehensions, whilst her body shrunk away almost to a shadow of her former self. "If children may be lost—why not my child?" was the ceaseless torment of her mind through a long series of wretched days, and sleepless nights. The assurance of her Calvinist friends, and of the man who had done the mischief, that there was no reason to suppose *her* child was amongst the number of the reprobated, did not suffice for the feelings of a fond mother. To know that such a thing was, in the most remote degree possible, was enough to ruin *her* peace, enough to make earth hateful, and heaven itself undesirable. Such, as I have stated, was the condition of my poor mother's mind, for several months—at times suffering the most acute misery;—at others, bordering on insanity. At length a comforter came, in the person of a venerable member of the Wesleyan Methodist connexion. He first soothed her mind, by the kindly acts of sympathy, and then relieved it of its burthen altogether, by convincing that such a doctrine is not true—but is as repugnant to the word of God as it is to the feelings of humanity. Blessed is his memory to me for that act. It gave back to a sorrowing husband, a happy and affectionate wife; to her children, a fond and a good mother. From that time she has been a member of the Wesley-

an connexion; a sect whose creed does justice to the *will* but not to the *power* of God to save all mankind; and which repudiates with just abhorrence the perdition of the infant race of Adam.

Years of absence have past, beloved parent, and the waters of separation have rolled between us. We may meet on earth no more. Blessed is the sure and certain hope to my soul, which depends not on chance or time, that *we shall* meet in heaven. May that hope comfort thee, be thy staff and thy consolation, through the latter days of thy pilgrimage; and may it be a ministering angel beside thy couch of death.

W.

STANZAS.

"There is no peace for the wicked, saith the Lord."

I.

Trust not to the bad man's smile,
For it is but a specious show;
A beam on the surface—the while
All is darkness, and coldness below.*
Trust not to his mirthful jest;
Give not to his joy belief;
It sounds to his own sad heart
Like a mockery of its grief.

II.

Trust not to his merry song,
So loud at the banquet heard;
Though joyous it sound to that throng,
As the carol of morning bird,
His tongue, like a hireling thing,
Must the sorrow it knows conceal;
And in sounds of gladness sing
Of pleasure his heart cannot feel.

III.

Trust not to that man, whilst around
Society's charm is thrown;
But wait, till he may be found,
When the revel is over—alone.
Where now is the bright sunny smile?
Where now the joy beaming brow?
The jovial song, and the mirthful wile?
Where, oh! where are they now?

IV.

The smile is exchanged for the tear,
(Should his bosom find so much relief.)
No song—but a sigh meets the ear,
And his brow wears the impress of grief
"Why went they," he cries, "so soon,
Oh why not their vigils keep,
Till Nature had gained me the boon,
Which conscience denies to me?—sleep.

V.

"I was wretched indeed even then,
Yet still, if not pleasure, 'twas pride,
From the eye and observance of men,
The mis'ry I suffered to hide:
How little to them was it known,
That the joy, which seemed sole monarch
there,
Held but a divided throne
And sat, side by side with Despair!"

VI.

Trust not to the bad man's smile,
It is like the flower's which grow,
Where the fires of destruction, the while
Are burning, unseen, below.
And sooner within the breast
Of the earth, shall those death-fires cease
Than the mind of the guilty know rest,
And the soul of the wicked find peace.

W.

*I am indebted to Mr. Moore for the idea contained in these two lines.—W.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1832.

NOTICE.

The usual order of exercises at the Orchard-st. Church is resumed. The morning service commences at half past ten, the afternoon at half past three, and the evening at half past seven o'clock. The course of Sabbath evening Lectures, on the doctrines of Universalism, proposed to be delivered in this Church, will be postponed for a few weeks. Due notice will be given of their commencement.

"SKETCHES FROM LIFE."

We would invite the attention of our readers to "Sketches from Life," a series of original articles promised us, and which we commenced last week. They are from a practised pen, and can hardly fail of exciting interest. The sketch presented this week is but too true. Many a mother has been left in an hour when most they needed the consolations of religion, to hug to their bleeding bosoms the dismal creed of Calvin, and to weep, with an agony becoming despair, over the fearful destiny of their lost loved ones. The doctrine of infant damnation, as "W." well observes, has been driven from the pulpit, but it still lives in the creed. It is taught in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. It is taught in every system which embraces the fundamental doctrines of Calvinism. The poetical article which follows the Sketch, it will be seen, is from the same pen. It is a faithful picture, and will be read no doubt with interest. We welcome "W." to the columns of the Messenger, and congratulate our patrons on this accession to our list of correspondents. S.

SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind. Matt. xv, 14.

Few passages of scripture, it is believed, are more sadly perverted than the above. Our Savior had been reprehending the Scribes and Pharisees for transgressing the law of God by their traditions. The occasion was the question these hypocrites had put him, saying, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." After showing how they had transgressed even the law of God by their traditions, the inspired historian adds, "And he called the multitude and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, knowest thou not that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind."

From this command to *let them alone*, some have foolishly inferred that teachers of religious errors were not to be formally opposed. In illustration of this singular opinion, we recollect an anecdote related in the New-York Evangelist some months since, a paper professedly "de-

voted to doctrinal discussion," and a bold opposer of all religious error which it feels itself able successfully to oppose. The anecdote is related with great apparent pleasure, and the poor Universalist, of course, is completely foiled. We are told that at an *inquiry meeting* held during the late "interesting revival" in New-Haven, Conn. "appeared — a Universalist preacher. But he came not to inquire but cavil." How this was known we are not informed. But *drunkards* and *profane swearers*, as Br. Leavitt in his abundant charity, affects to think Universalists to be, are seldom honest inquirers. The story goes on. "After the meeting was dismissed he (the Universalist) remained, and addressing himself to Dr. S. attempted to engage him in a controversy. Dr. S. said to him, 'Sir, I have no time to engage in an argument with you now; it is 6 o'clock, and I have to preach at 7.' 'But, Sir,' replied the Universalist, 'it is your duty, if you think me in an error, to undeceive me.' 'No,' says Dr. S. 'the Bible tells me to let you alone.' 'I deny that the Bible has any such command,' replies the other. 'It certainly has,' replied Dr. S. 'and I will give you chapter and verse: — Christ tells his disciples, 'Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind, and both will fall into the ditch together.'" See N. Y. Evangelist of April 23.

Such was the triumph that Dr. S. gained over the cavilling Universalist. But did not the Dr. know that he was perverting the passage? If he did, he was guilty of downright falsehood, and we envy him not his victory. If he did not, his D. D. was but poorly merited.

Had the great reformers adopted this exposition of our Savior's command, Popery would yet have been the prevailing religion. They would have said, "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind, and both will fall into the ditch together." They would never have lifted their voices to rescue millions from the thralldom of religious error. Had this sentiment been strictly adhered to the Rev. Mr. S. would probably have now been an insignificant curate, starving on 40 pounds a year in some country village, instead of a learned Dr. in New-Haven. Had our Savior himself so construed his own words, we should never have known Christianity. The Pharisees in Judea, and the priests among the Gentiles were emphatically blind leaders of the blind. "Let them alone," he would have said — "expose not their faults—correct not their errors—use no means to undeceive them." But could this have been received as an instance of the love of truth? Would not the blindest have seen that such conduct betrayed a total want of confidence in his own opinions?

The passage may be easily understood without involving any disregard for truth, or for the conversion of those in religious error. *Let them alone*. In what capacity? Why surely let them alone as teachers. They be blind leaders. And since they are blind, none but the blind will suffer themselves to be led by them. Give no heed to their traditions. Mind not their teachings any farther than they are sustained by scripture authority, and even then not because they teach thus, but because there is a 'thus saith the

Lord! Perhaps the phrase, *let them alone*, might have been translated *neglect or disregard them*, that is, as religious teachers, and this because they are blind leaders.

It is clearly our duty as christians, and well-wishers of our fellow men, to pity rather than despise those whose minds are beclouded with the mists and darkness of error, and especially of such error as we regard destructive to the present peace or future prospects of our race. It is no less clearly our duty, to exert the powers God has given us in enlightening the darkened understanding, correcting the misguided heart, and elevating the debased affections of mankind. S.

FINE DOCTRINES,

OR 'PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT.'

We have observed several very sage articles of late in the Advocate and Journal. It would gratify us to copy them entire, but want of room forbids, and besides we doubt if our readers would enter with as much pleasure into this "philosophy" as ourselves. We shall therefore only extract a few of the best paragraphs.

"A free agent, a holy, happy, and most mighty angel, in a paradisaical state of probation, then, by *conceiving* and adopting lies in place of truth, became perverted from an angel of light, or of truth, into a devil or angel of darkness, or of error; and man who was also created a perfect, holy, and happy being, in a paradisaical state of probation, *receiving* and adopting lies, became perverted from a child of God and an heir of heaven, into a child of the devil and an heir of wrath," [endless hell.]

Query: Where did "ADVISED" become advised of these very wonderful things? The Bible says nothing of them. Will he have the great goodness to *advise* his readers of his authority. For ourselves, we dare not believe him, lest we should "*receive* and adopt *lies* and become the child of the devil." Heaven, then, is a state of *probation*, as well as this poor world. How many honest christians will be disappointed. They have been looking forward for years to heaven as the *reward* of all their *good works* here in this state of *probation*. But, alas! alas! heaven is a state of probation too: and if "*a holy happy and most mighty angel*" fell from that state, how can the poor sinner hope to escape a similar fate? But will "*Advised*," inform us of his authority?

"Moral evil being the entire cause of all natural, spiritual, and eternal evil, the various evils are therefore in the world by reason of sin."

Had not man sinned, then, we may believe that the brutes would never have died, the winds would never have blown, nor the rocks fell, nor the flowers faded, nor disease been known; and man himself, and every thing else on earth, would have been *immortal*. This sounds very much like what somebody said in a most excellent and canonical book called Wisdom, ii, 23, 24. "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world."

But we read of one, who came with all power, to destroy death, and him that has the power of death, that is, the devil, and also, the works of the devil. Will evil be eternal if it is destroyed?

"When did the Almighty ever say that he, upon any condition, and much less unconditionally, willed, decreed, appointed, planned, or purposed any pain, death or destruction to any of his creatures?*** By what authority, therefore, does any one presume to say that the Divine Being ever caused any disorder, pain, or death either to body or soul?"

We beg leave to refer "Advised" to a volume which he seems to have overlooked called the Bible. It is a curious work, and might well repay a perusal. Especially would we ask him to read a passage found in Isaiah xlv, 7. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things." It seems "Advised" has studied Zoroaster more than inspiration. If his views be correct however, we should like to be advised how the idea of punishment under the government of God can be maintained, for God does not "cause any disorder or pain or death to either body or soul." It is all the work of the devil. Who will cause it, when the devil and his works are destroyed by Jesus Christ? S.

REVIVAL TRACT SOCIETY.

It may be interesting to our readers to know that a Society with the above title has been organized in this city. It dates its existence August 4th, 1832. The American Tract Society is from some cause or other not exactly the desideratum with our more zealous friends. The objects of the present Association are expressed in the first article of the Constitution to be "to publish original Tracts calculated to bring sinners to immediate repentance, and to stimulate christians to be co-workers with God in converting the world." Among the gentlemen of the Committee we recognize the well known C. G. FINNEY, LEWIS TAPPAN, HERMAN NORTON, JOEL PARKER, and our good friend JOSHUA LEAVITT of the Evangelist.

The real objects of this Society, we believe, are to spread more rapidly the new system of divinity, now coming somewhat in vogue in this region, and connected with this, is also seen a deep rooted anxiety to explode some of the prevailing errors of the Presbyterian creed. In this good work we are happy to see them engaged. It would please us better, (we speak plainly,) bad as we are, were these professed christians less hypocritical. For we cannot acquit them of hypocrisy, marked and disgraceful, to profess a faith in, and adherence to, the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, while at the same time they are using every exertion in their power to bring into discredit some of its most essential doctrines. We love frankness, honesty every where, and particularly are they indispensable in religion.

That the above remarks are not unmerited we think will appear from a Tract called the "Crucible, or True and False Hopes Tried," the first publication by this infant Society. Among other observations in that article, directly opposed to the spirit and letter of the Presbyterian Confession, we find the following. Under the second head of his subject, the writer says, "I will now mention some things which are proof positive that the affections of the persons possessing them are not gracious, and that their religious hopes are bad;" and in the 22d item of this proof positive of ungracious affections and bad hopes, he mentions,

"A denial of the sinner's infinite obligations to repent, believe, and love God, by saying that 'a sinner cannot repent, believe, love, and obey God.' This is absolutely denying his infinite obligation to obey God's commands; for it is a dictate of common sense, that no person is under any obligation to do what is utterly impossible."

Now to see how directly this sweeping declaration is opposed to the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, we only need to quote one single pas-

sage; Chap. x, Sec. 2. "This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man; who is altogether PASSIVE therein, until being quickened and renewed BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, he is thereby ENABLED to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it." Should this seem singular we have only to reflect on the natural state of man as he is presented in that Creed. See Chap. ix, Sec. 3. "Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost ALL ABILITY OF WILL to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is good, and dead in sin, is NOT ABLE, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto."

To see the unblushing and shameless hypocrisy of this "Revival Tract Society," we have only to remember, that most if not all of the Committee are ministers, and at their ordination answered the following question in the affirmative: "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" And now with the hardihood of martyrs they declare, in open violation of the plainest doctrines of that Confession, that a denial of the sinner's natural ability to repent, believe, and love God, is proof positive of ungracious affections, and bad religious hopes. The consequences to the genuine Presbyterian will in their opinion be most alarming. They say, "Now it must be a very dreadful thing to die with a false hope." Again; "But if a man goes into eternity with a false hope he cannot come back to rectify his mistake. His error is fatal. His soul is lost."

We could point out several other assertions in the "Crucible," which are evidently aimed at doctrines most unequivocally taught in the Presbyterian Confession. We will mention but one or two. The writer in closing the Tract says, "There are some things which vitiate, and show the spuriousness of many experiences, that would otherwise appear tolerably well." Among which he includes, "Mistake respecting the nature of justification. Thinking that this is the payment of a debt for us, by the obedience and suffering of Christ, rather than being a pardon of our sins for Christ sake." For one moment look at the Confession, Chap. xi, Sec. 3. "Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf." All Calvinists, then, according to the Revival Tract Society, must go to hell, as their experiences are spurious, since they look upon justification as the payment of a debt by the death and suffering of Christ.

But enough. We have no faith in the peculiar doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, which this infant Society seems anxious to explode. But we respect honest error infinitely more than truth under the garb of hypocrisy. S.

CONDITION OF MAINE.

The last Christian Pilot gives some very interesting extracts from a series of letters now publishing in the Christian Mirror, under the title "Home Missions in Maine." The letters are written by the Rev. R. S. Storrs, one of the Home Missionaries.

"But my dear Sir," says he, "if much has been done, I am sure much more remains to be done. Of 400,000 souls in Maine, there are not more than twelve or thirteen thousand that are connected with the Congregational Churches. Allow an equal number to belong to the Methodist, the Baptist and Free-will Baptists communions respectively, (and I suppose this to be a large allowance,) there is yet but one-eighth of your population that profess to act under the

influence of christian principle. Nine-tenths of your population, if judged by the gospel standard, will probably be found among the impenitent and unbelieving."

We should exclaim with the Roman orator, *O tempora, O mores.* NINE-TENTHS of the whole POPULATION of Maine going down to hell!!—This is too horrible! In Maine 350,000—in Vermont 200,000—in the city of New-York at least 110,000 who are drunkards, sabbath-breakers and impure, and how many more who are mere moralists, the Lord only knows. The amount then of "impenitent and unbelieving" in the state of Maine, Vermont, and the city of New-York alone will amount to at least 700,000 souls, probably more than three times the number of the inhabitants in both the Society and Sandwich Islands, to which so many missionaries, and at such an expense have been sent!! We say to our religious friends—Look at home; and while thousands and millions of your countrymen are exposed to endless ruin, aggravated almost infinitely by their superior privileges and knowledge, think not of sending the gospel to the heathen of other countries. S.

DEDICATION.

The Church lately erected by the First Universalist Society of North Salem, N. Y. will be dedicated to the service of the one true and living God, on Wednesday the 19th inst. Religious services may be expected morning and afternoon, to commence in the morning at half past ten. Ministering brethren, and friends, are respectfully invited to attend.

SETTLEMENT AND ORDINATION.

Br. William Whittaker, whose conversion to Universalism we noticed in our paper of July 21st, has received and accepted an invitation to become pastor of the First Universalist Society in Hudson, N. Y. Ordination it is expected will be conferred upon him, on Tuesday evening the 11th inst. Sermon by T. J. Sawyer.

A Universalist meeting house in Exeter, N. H. was dedicated on the second Sabbath in August. Sermon by Br. T. F. King.

PRACTICAL RELIGION.

It has been sometimes stated by liberal Christians—those who think more favorably of a practical than a theoretical religion—that Faith is nothing worth, than as it influences its possessor to a performance of the practical duties of life. That a religion which does not exert this influence is a miserable deception, we do most cheerfully accord. St. James never uttered a more pertinent truth, than when he said "Faith without works is dead." It is indeed so; and if dead, had better be buried out of sight. For if exhibited above ground, it is but an offence—a disgusting nuisance. There are already we fear, too many such dead carcasses in the Church, for these choleric times. But to return. It strikes us that Faith is important in more than one grand particular. If an upright life were all that is important, we know not how Christianity would be a blessing to many unbelievers, or to Mahometans and Pagans:—we mean, of course, to the honest and upright ones; for that there are such, we suppose no one would be disposed to disallow. Faith we believe is important not only as it relates to the practice of the duties of life; but also as it furnishes a satisfactory food for the mind and lays the foundation of spiritual health and rich consolations. Take a person in trouble for instance. He has lost all which he holds dear on the earth. Does he not need something to sustain and comfort him? Does he not need cheering and invigorating hopes of the future? If Faith related only to practical duties of this life, Christianity would lose much of its distinctive value. He

could find nothing in it to administer consolation to the mind in a season of gloom and in the hour of severity and affliction. The Christian faith enables its possessor to look beyond the trials and duties of this life to a better country in the heavens. It enables him to embrace again the endearing objects of his affections—to anticipate the time when he himself shall be free from the cares and tribulations and sins of this evil world, and be consummately happy in the realms of everlasting light and love. Without this important consideration in religion, Faith would lose half its excellency. Religion, therefore, is valuable, not only as it relates to the duties of this life, but also as it furnishes a sustaining and cheering hope of the future. Under this view, we can readily see wherein consists the superior value of the Christian religion over every other.—*Christ. Intel.*

GOOD TIDINGS.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

The sacred scriptures are remarkable, not only for revealing truths unknown before, but also for beauty and sublimity of description. "It was the privilege of the Hebrew bards to be employed upon subjects possessing an interest as enduring as the attributes of God, and the nature of dependant man." Their descriptions for the most part, come in language the most glowing from the very depths of the soul. Who can read the passage at the head of this article and not admire its beauty? There is an eloquence about it which touches the heart, and calls forth admiration and praise. The sentiments contained in it are at once grand and impressive. They become still more so, if we suppose that the prophet had an allusion to the great Savior, who appeared on the mountains of Jerusalem, bringing good tidings of good, and publishing salvation. Jesus was a messenger sent from heaven to declare the tidings of a Father's love to a perishing world. He declared that "God so loved the world that he was sent not to condemn it but to save it." He went about the streets of Jerusalem, publishing the great doctrine of the final salvation of the world. Having devoted his life to the promulgation of truth, he at last submitted unto death. But the grave could not hold him. Death was obliged to yield up his victim, for his kingdom was invaded. He burst the bars of death, and rose triumphant. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." Now life and immortality were brought to light for all mankind. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The grave no longer presents a barrier between the present and the future. It is but the gate through which we pass to endless joy. "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

Our text furnishes an excellent criterion by which we may know true and false messengers. Those whom God sends, always bring good tidings of good. Those who go of their own accord, carry their own testimony, and it is just as partial as the human heart. It proceeds from an impure fountain. On any other subject but religion, we should hardly be disposed to tolerate those who are constantly publishing evil tidings. But under this sacred name, the character of God has been disgraced, man has been made sorrowful, and our fair world almost turned into a gloomy dungeon. Let us do all we can then to dissipate the darkness, to cheer the hopes and brighten the prospects of mankind. Let

us spread abroad the glorious tidings of the grace of God from pole to pole, till the wide earth shall again bloom with joy, and another Eden bless our eyes.

THE WAY TO MAKE MEN GOOD.

Well, what is the way to make men good? says the reader, as his eye catches the caption to this article. There has been a great variety of experiments tried, and a great many systems of faith invented with the professed object of making men virtuous, and still they are wicked. What shall be done, or how shall we proceed to make them virtuous and good? We will tell you kind reader. In order to make men virtuous, you have nothing to do but make them substantially happy. So that if you wish to produce an improvement in the moral character of men, you have nothing to do but to be diligent and constant in your exertions to make them contented and happy.

Did any man ever commit a crime when he was happy? We believe not. Ask the poor drunkard, why he first went to that fountain of death, and he will tell you he was unhappy and sought for pleasure there. Ask the thief, why he laid hands unlawfully on his neighbor's goods, and he will tell you that he was miserable, and sought for happiness. Now if these men had in their minds those principles which would have made them contented and happy, that drunkard had been a sober man, and the wretch who groans in a dungeon had been a good citizen and an honest man.

Give a man bread enough, and he will not steal bread. Give him money enough, and he will not steal money. It is so here. Satisfy a man's desire with the bread, and the water of life, and he will have no occasion or wish to go after the stagnant water of sin, or the filthy husks of iniquity. The observation of our readers will satisfy them all, that, when men are contented and happy, the breast is tender and disposed to every good word and work, but when anxious cares torment the breast, evil and tormenting emotions render us uneasy and miserable; it is there that the tempest is found, and we plunge in sin of a crimson hue. Reader, the way is open before you, and if you wish to see men practice the virtues that adorn and beautify human nature, be diligent in striving to make all around you contented and happy. Hush their anxious fears of the future, and lead them down to the cool waters of that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God.

Then, and not till then, will the human breast be renovated, and good works be practised by the living children of humanity. This is "the way to make men good."—*Vi. Watchman.*

LADIES' MAGAZINE.

CONTENTS. No. 8, for August. *Original Miscellany*—Roman Sketches, The Bachelor's Excuse, The Brothers. *Original Poetry*, My Dream, To ****, Sisera. *Literary Notices*—Illustrations of Political Economy, No. 1; Life in the Wilds, Insect Miscellanies, New-York Mirror, Notice to Correspondents.

DIED.

In this city on Saturday last, Mr. Thomas Pool, aged 42.

On Tuesday morning, Mr. Jacob Bennett, formerly of Peru, Vt. aged 25.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. Hillyer, will preach at Beekman, N. Y. the 3d Sunday in September; at Peekskill, on Tuesday evening 18th; at Long Ridge, 4th Sunday, 22d; at Stamford, Monday evening, 24th; at Rye, Tuesday evening 25th; and at Hightstown, N. J. 5th Sunday, 30th Sept.

Br. Andrews, will preach at Newtown, Conn. on the second Sunday of September, (to-mor-

row); at North Salem on Friday evening, (the 28th Sept.)—at Somers, N. Y. on the 5th Sunday of Sept. (the 30th.)—at Kingston N. J. on Friday evening, the 5th of October, and at Hightstown, N. J. on the 1st Sunday of Oct.

Br. B. B. Hallock will preach at Peekskill on Sunday, 9th inst. (to-morrow.)

* * S. R. S. will appear next week.

AGENTS FOR THE MESSENGER.

NEW-YORK.
T. Purdy, Rye.
Post Master, or Epenetus Howe, North Salem.
H. Bailey, Somers.
J. McCoy, Peekskill.
J. Smith, Beekman.
Milton B. Allerton, Dover.
G. M. Perry, Dover Plain.
Hiram Price, Auenha.
Rev'd T. J. Whitcomb, Hudson.
S. Van Schaack, Albany.
Publisher of the Anchor, Troy.
Publisher of the Magazine, or D. Heald, Utica.
Everitt E. Guild, Walton.
Rev. R. O. Williams, Amsterdam.
Nathan Sawyer, Medina.
A. McLean, P. M. Adams.
Rev. L. L. Saddle, LeRoy.
B. M. Underhill, Wolcott.
A. Wells, P. M., Wells Corner.
M. W. Riggs, Avon.
George Gorton, East Avon.
J. D. Cooper, Kempville.
S. L. Hayes, Cairo.
Rev. O. Whiston, Oswego.
Rev. G. W. Montgomery or Benj. Caryl, Buffalo.
E. Benedict, Plattsburgh.
Rev. S. R. Smith, Clinton.
James M. Entee, Kingston.
CONNECTICUT.
Roswell Husted, Stanwich.
G. Lonsberry, Long Ridge.
Fred. A. Smith, Stamford.
N. S. Bailey or L. H. Finch, Norwalk.
A. Gray, or J. D. Taylor, Saugatuck.
O. C. Sanford, Weston.
A. Price, Danbury.
H. Fairchild, Newtown.
F. P. Ambler, Trumbull.
A. A. McNeil, Bridgeport.
P. M. or Daniel Williams, Stratford.
Hezekiah Scott, Ridgefield.
Rev. T. Fisk, or J. Dantz, New-Haven.
Rev. J. Boyden, Berlin.
Rev. R. Smith, Middle town.
Rev. L. F. W. Andrews, or B. Sperry, Publisher of the Inquirer, Hartford.
Elijah Porter, P. M. East Windsor.
Francis Thayer, Winchester.
Post Master, Waterbury.
Post Master, New London.
E. P. Smith, Norwich.
Rev. N. Dodge, Waterford.
RHODE ISLAND.
S. W. Wheeler, Providence.
MASSACHUSETTS.
Editor of the Trumpet, or Marsh, Capen & Lyon, Boston.
Rev. H. Ballou, 2d, Roxbury.
John Kenrick, Newton.
Franklin Woodham, Pittsfield.
NEW-HAMPSHIRE.
Rev. T. F. King, Portsmouth.
Rev. W. S. Balch, Claremont.
EDITORS OF THE PATRIOT, CONCORD.
MAINE.
Publishers of the Intelligencer, Gardiner.
Rev. James W. Haskins, Hampden.
Rev. M. Rayner, Portland.
VERMONT.
Publisher of the Watchman, Woodstock.
Benj. Sawyer, Jr. Reading.
C. Mahoney, Derby.
Isaac Blodget, P. M. Randolph.
Post Master, or Charles Pierce, Chester.
NEW-JERSEY.
Aaron Baldwin, Newark.
Thomas Day, Camptown.
Post Master, Kingston.
Samuel C. Johns, Hightstown.
Jos. M. Brown, Augusta.
P. M., New Brunswick.
D. Bromley, Bloomfield.
PENNSYLVANIA.
Revs. A. C. Thomas and Z. Fuller, Philadelphia.
Wm. George, Pottstown.
John K. Wright, Easton.
R. Edgecomb, Cowdenspost.
Selfridge & Wilson, Allentown.
Editors American Manufacturer, Pittsburgh.
J. Kingsbury, P. M. Siscohequin.
Samuel Ritter, P. M. Reading.
J. Mouk, Marietta.
SOUTH CAROLINA.
Hugh Caperton, Union, Monroe Co.
S. P. Bailey, P. M. Union Court House.
NORTH CAROLINA.
George Nichols, Plymouth.
GEORGIA.
J. Wickers, Worthen's store.
J. Ellis, Augusta.
A. Green, P. M. Green Hill.
James Eppinger, Savannah.
OHIO.
Wm. Pitt Putnam, Belpre.
LOUISIANA.
Post Master, New Orleans.
ALABAMA.
Green Wood, Montgomery Post Master, Rodgersville.
A. Sheppard, Pleasant Hill, Dallas Co.
Post Master, Portland.
Jona. Hill, Allenton, Wilcox Co.
N. Grigsley, Selma.
MISSISSIPPI.
E. G. Peyton, Gallatin.
ILLINOIS.
S. T. Sawyer, Edwardsville.
FLORIDA.
Wm. Hollingsworth, P. M. Bailey's Mills, Jeff'n Co.
MICHIGAN TERRITORY.
Eben. Davis, Tecumseh.
UPPER CANADA.
L. Cruttenden, Oxford, Or. District.

IDOLS.

What is an idol? Every breast
Has idols of its own;
Sometimes of gold and silver bright,
Sometimes of wood and stone.

And there are idols—sins I mean—
Which young and old adore;
O God of mercy! in thy love
Destroy them ever more.

If there be aught the world contains,
Which I love more than Thee,
That sinful love within my heart
Idolatry must be.

Then take that sinful love away,
And place thy love within;
And break down every image there
That bears the shape of sin.

O give me with a contrite mind,
To bend before thy throne;
And offer humble prayer and praise
Through Jesus Christ alone.

Deeply inscribed upon my heart
Let thy commandments be;
That there may live within my breast,
No other God but Thee.

RAPIDITY OF TIME.

Swiftly glide our years—they follow each other like the waves of the ocean.—Memory calls up the persons we once knew, the scenes in which we once were actors; they appear before the mind like the phantoms of a night vision. Behold the boy, rejoicing in the gaiety of his soul; the wheels of time cannot move too rapidly for him—the light of hope dances in his eye, the smiles of expectation play upon his lip, he looks forward to long years of joy to come; his spirit burns within him when he hears of great men and mighty deeds, he wants to be a man, he longs to mount the hill of ambition, to tread the path of honor, to hear the shouts of applause. Look at him again, he is now in the meridian of life, care has stamped its wrinkle upon his brow, disappointment has dimmed the lustre of his eye, sorrow has thrown its gloom upon his countenance, he looks back upon the waking dreams of his youth, and sighs for their futility, each revolving year seems to diminish something from his little stock of happiness, and he discovers that the season of youth, when the pulse of anticipation beats high, is the only season of enjoyment. Who is he of the aged locks? His form is bent and totters, his footsteps move rapidly toward the tomb, he looks back upon the past, his days appear to have been few, and he confesses that they were evil, the magnificence of the great is to him vanity, the hilarity of youth, folly—he considers how soon the gloom of death must overshadow the one and disappointment end the other, the world presents little to attract and nothing to delight him; still, however, he would linger in it, still he would lengthen out his days, though of 'beauty's blossom,' of 'fancy's flash,' of 'music's breath,' he is forced to exclaim, 'I have no pleasure in them.' A few years of infirmity, insanity and pain, must consign him to idiocy or the grave, yet this was the gay, the generous, the high-souled boy, who beheld his ascending path of life strewn with flowers without a thorn. Such is human life, but such cannot be the ultimate destinies of man.

THE GUINEA AND THE APPLE BLOSSOM.

By some strange chance, a guinea and a piece of apple blossom found themselves lying side by side on a marble slab. The guinea was fresh from the mint, whilst the blossom just gathered, was still spangled with globules of morning dew. Her companion, perceiving her superior beauty, silently acknowledged it; until the bright noon-

day sun fading the freshness of her rosy petals, the purse proud and conceited coin vented his disdain in these insulting words—'Poor frail and short lived creature! see how thy beauty fades, thy brightness vanishes: thou who so lately rearest thy head in all the pride of youth and beauty. What is thy value now? Who cares for thee? Where is the hand that plucked thee?—Where is the perfume that thou in thy vanity, shed on every passing gale? Useless fragment!—Cast on me thy dying looks, and there behold true worth and strength. Even from the hour when, issuing from my mother earth, I first beheld the light of day, have the grains of which I am composed, been protected and cherished by my benefactor, man. It was he who first brought me by dint of industry and skill, from out of one of the richest veins of a Peruvian mine! It was he who with infinite care and dexterity, cleansed me and purified me from the contagion of all baser matter, and brought me over stormy seas to kings and kingdoms, laboring and fighting to receive me! It was he who finally moulding me to his will, gave my fair proportions and my graceful form, and it is he who still struggles to possess me! Think of my strength, my durability, my immortality—and then, pale flower, acknowledge, that of earthly things 'tis I alone am truly great!' The blossom inwardly smiled at the conceit of the guinea, rallied her drooping spirits, and raised her drooping head to reply:—'Cease, O proud coin!' said she, 'to persecute thus my dying moments with thy vain boasts; for know that, spite of all thy vaunting, I can esteem myself worthier far than thee! what art thou and all thy kind but the cause of every evil that can assail mankind!—From love of thee come all his pride and selfishness, oppression and dishonesty; and to possess thee, base lucre that thou art! does not man forget his Maker, and forfeit even his hopes of future bliss. Call not thyself a blessing to them for thou art his bane, his everlasting curse; whilst I, perfected as I came from the hands of my Creator, have to this hour been unto man an image of his wisdom and his love! I speak not of myself alone but of all my beautiful species. Fed by the wholesome juices which rising from our mother earth, circulate in our veins and expand our fibres; nourished by sunshine and by gentle showers we reach unto maturity. Our germs increase, and ripening under summer suns, present, at last, to man a wholesome and refreshing fruit. He accepts the usual gift and blesses God! But this end I was not doomed to see, and yet a higher destiny was mine! mine was the glorious privilege of first turning a youthful heart, in grateful adoration, to the knowledge of its Maker! A pious mother plucking me from off my parent branch, displaying to the wondering eye of her fair child the beauty and the use of all my parts: she poured into its astonished ear the history of my being, how that from a little seed the tree was raised, how that from each blossom the fruit would be produced; and pointing to the blue heaven above, she whispered the great name of God! and the child, clasping its little hands, lisped, with lips of gratitude and love. 'How very good he is!' The blossom dropped, her leaflets closed around her, and her last breath of odor was wafted away forever.—*Juvenile Souvenir.*

Experience demonstrates that none walk more exactly and closely with God than such as are most assured of his love. If we look into heaven, there we may see the glorious angels and glorified saints, who have not only a full assurance, but a full possession of the love of their God. And yet where has God more universal and cheerful obedience than from these? Hence we pray, *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.*—*S. Clarke.*

Prospectus for the Second Volume of the
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence
the defence of Liberal Principles, generally,
in Religion, and miscellaneous reading,
of chaste and moral tendency.

The first Vol. of this work will close on the last Saturday in Oct. next. In presenting proposals for the 2d Vol. few observations will be necessary in explanation of its objects, and those few cannot, perhaps, be better expressed than in the language of the prospectus for the first volume. "Its primary design is to 'plead the cause' of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians, (the Universalists)—to illustrate and enforce their principles, and defend firmly, though as far as possible, with christian candor, their doctrine from the opprobrium which even professing christians endeavor too readily, to fasten upon it; and in thus defending its own, it will advocate the civil and religious rights of all. Professing a sentiment which recognizes the Almighty as our common Father, and mankind as brethren indeed, it can know no exclusive privileges. Whatever it may ask for itself, it asks for ALL."

From experience thus far in the first Volume, the Publisher is inclined to believe that with reasonable exertion on the part of friends an abundant support may be obtained for the Paper—that even from the city alone, a very respectable patronage may be derived. The importance of sustaining the Paper here, to the cause in which it is engaged, need not be urged, either to friends in the city or country, and the publisher appeals to them, without hesitation, for their support and interest in its behalf—for their active co-operation in extending its circulation, by communicating with those of their friends on the subject, who are known to be friendly. He particularly requests those inclined to patronize the *Second Volume*, to signify their intentions as early as possible. It is important he should know his probable reliance for support, a reasonable time before the close of the first Volume. Persons unacquainted with the Paper can be accommodated with back numbers, for examination, on application at the Office 85 1-2 Bowery.

TERMS.—The Messenger will be published every Saturday, on a royal sheet, quarto form, close print, at *Two Dollars* per annum, in advance, or *Two Dollars and Fifty Cents* if not paid within six months from time of subscribing. Letters to be addressed, post paid, "P. Price, 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York."

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